

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A passenger vehicle, including:
a body having a longitudinal axis; and
an expansion portion connected to the body and configured to move substantially along the longitudinal axis between a retracted position wherein the body and the expansion portion define a first volume of interior space, and an extended position wherein the body and the expansion portion define a second volume of interior space, the second volume being larger than the first volume.
2. The vehicle of claim 1, wherein the body includes a pair of rear panels, a roof extending between the rear panels, and a floor extending between the rear panels, and the expansion portion includes a rear wall, a pair of side walls, an upper wall extending between the side walls, and a lower wall extending between the side walls.
3. The vehicle of claim 2, wherein the upper wall is positioned below the roof, the lower wall is positioned above the floor, and the side walls are positioned between the rear panels when the expansion portion is in the retracted position.
4. The vehicle of claim 2, wherein the upper wall is positioned above the roof, the lower wall is positioned above the floor, and the side walls are positioned outside the rear panels when the expansion portion is in the retracted position.
5. The vehicle of claim 2, wherein the roof includes a outer shell and an inner shell, and the side panels each include an outer panel and an inner panel, the upper wall being positioned between the outer shell and the inner shell, and each side wall being positioned between an outer panel and an inner panel of a rear panel when the expansion portion is in the retracted position.
6. The vehicle of claim 5, the expansion portion further including a flange extending along the side walls and the upper wall, the flange engaging a first surface of the vehicle to seal the first volume when the expansion

portion is in the retracted position and a second surface of the vehicle to seal the second volume when the expansion portion is in the extended position.

7. The vehicle of claim 2, wherein the roof, the rear panels, and the floor define an edge that extends substantially around an opening, the rear wall including a perimeter that engages the edge when the expansion portion is in the retracted position.

8. The vehicle of claim 2, wherein the rear wall includes a lift gate door having a hatch window.

9. The vehicle of claim 2, wherein the rear wall includes a drop gate door and a hatch window.

10. The vehicle of claim 2, wherein the rear wall includes a pair of doors.

11. The vehicle of claim 2, wherein the rear wall includes a swinging door that extends from one rear panel to the other rear panel.

12. The vehicle of claim 2, wherein each rear panel includes a window and each side wall includes a side window, each side window being substantially aligned with a portion of a rear panel window when the expansion portion is in the retracted position.

13. The vehicle of claim 2, wherein each rear panel includes an inner perimeter seal and an outer perimeter seal, and each side wall includes an inner engagement surface and an outer engagement surface, the inner engagement surfaces engaging the inner perimeter seals when the expansion portion is in the retracted position and the outer engagement surfaces engaging the outer perimeter seals when the expansion portion is in the extended position.

14. The vehicle of claim 2, wherein the body further includes a pair of wheel wells, the lower wall extending between the wheel wells when the expansion portion is in the retracted position.

15. A vehicle; including:

a body;

an expansion portion adapted to connect to the body and configured to expand longitudinally between a first position defining a first volume of interior space, and a second position defining a second volume of interior space; and

a first seat connected to a floor of the body, the expansion portion being movable relative to the first seat between the retracted and extended positions.

16. The vehicle of claim 15, wherein the expansion portion is movable manually.

17. The vehicle of claim 15, further including an actuation and support assembly including a housing mounted to a frame of the vehicle, a bracket connected to the expansion portion, and a movable member connected between the housing and the bracket, the movable member being movable relative to the housing to move the expansion portion between the retracted and the extended positions.

18. The vehicle of claim 17, wherein the movable member is supported for movement within the housing.

19. The vehicle of claim 17, wherein the assembly is mounted below the expansion portion.

20. An expansion assembly for a vehicle, including:
an expansion portion configured to connect to a body of the vehicle and movable longitudinally between a retracted position defining a first interior space and an expanded position defining a second interior space, and

a plurality of actuation and support assemblies, each assembly including a housing configured for mounting to the body, a bracket connected to the expansion portion, and a movable member connected between the housing and the bracket, the movable member being movable relative to the housing to move the expansion portion between the retracted and the extended positions.

21. The vehicle of claim 20, wherein the housings of a first pair of assemblies are mounted substantially within a first rear panel of the body, and the housings of a second pair of assemblies are mounted substantially within a second rear panel of the body.

22. The vehicle of claim 21, wherein a portion of the movable members of the first pair of assemblies are mounted substantially within a first side wall of the expansion portion and a portion of the movable members of the second pair of assemblies are mounted substantially within a second side wall of the expansion portion.

23. The vehicle of claim 21, wherein one assembly of each of the first and the second pairs of assemblies is mounted in substantially parallel relationship to the longitudinal axis approximately half way between a floor of the body and a roof of the body.

24. The vehicle of claim 20, wherein the housing of a first assembly is mounted substantially within a first rear panel of the body, the housing of a second assembly is mounted substantially within a second rear panel of the body, a portion of the movable member of the first assembly is mounted substantially within a first side wall of the expansion portion, and a portion of the movable member of the second assembly is mounted substantially within a second side wall of the expansion portion.

25. The vehicle of claim 1, further including a first seat connected to a lower wall of the expansion portion and a second seat connected to a floor of the body, the first seat being spaced apart from the second seat by a first distance when the expansion portion is in the retracted position and by a second distance that is larger than the first distance when the expansion portion is in the extended position.

26. The vehicle of claim 25, wherein the first seat and the second seat are configured to face one another.

27. The vehicle of claim 25, further including a table mounted to a rear panel of the vehicle for movement between a stowed position wherein the table is substantially parallel to the rear panel and an in-use position wherein the table is supported at an angle relative to the rear panel.

28. The vehicle of claim 25, wherein the first seat includes a back, the first seat being connected to the lower wall such that the back is substantially adjacent a rear wall of the expansion portion.

29. The vehicle of claim 25, wherein the first seat and the second seat are configured to face away from one another.

30. The vehicle of claim 1, further including a first seat connected to a floor of the body, a second seat connected to the floor behind the first seat, a third seat connected to the floor behind the second seat.

31. The vehicle of claim 30, further including a fourth seat connected to the expansion portion behind the third seat for movement toward

and away from the third seat as the expansion portion is moved between the retracted position and the extended position.

32. The vehicle of claim 31, wherein the fourth seat is connected to a lower wall of the expansion portion.

33. The vehicle of claim 31, wherein the fourth seat is connected to a rear wall of the expansion portion.

34. The vehicle of claim 33, wherein the fourth seat is a jumper seat connected to a door of the rear wall.

35. The vehicle of claim 30, further including a fourth seat connected to the third seat.

36. The vehicle of claim 1, further including a first seat connected to a floor of the body, a second seat connected to a lower wall of the expansion portion behind the first seat, and a third seat connected to the lower wall of the expansion portion behind the second seat, the second seat and the third seat being movable toward and away from the first seat as the expansion portion is moved between the retracted position and the extended position.

37. The vehicle of claim 36, further including a table mounted to the first seat for movement between a stowed position wherein the table is substantially parallel to a back of the first seat and an in-use position wherein the table is supported at an angle relative to the back.

38. The vehicle of claim 36, further including a fourth seat connected to the lower wall of the expansion portion behind the third seat.

39. The vehicle of claim 1, wherein the vehicle is a pick-up truck with a bed having a cargo area, the expansion portion moving toward and away from a rear end of the bed during movement between the extended position and the retracted position, respectively.

40. The vehicle of claim 39, wherein the expansion portion reduces the cargo area of the bed when in the extended position.

41. The vehicle of claim 39, wherein the expansion portion includes a lower wall that is substantially planar with an upper edge of the bed.